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HEAT-TRANSFER AND PRESSURE DROP CORRELATIONS FOR HYDROGEN AND NITROGEN FLOWING THROUGH TUNGSTEN WIRE MESH AT TEMPERATURES TO 5200° R

by Byron L. Siegel, William L. Maag, Jack G. Slaby, and William F. Mattson

Lewis Research Center Cleveland, Ohio

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NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

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SUMMARY

Correlations for variable property heat-transfer and friction pressure drop data were obtained for forced convection of hydrogen and nitrogen through electrically heated tungsten wire mesh. These correlations represent the data of six different helically coiled wire meshes for the following range of conditions:

- (1) Mesh porosity of 64 to 72.2 percent
- (2) Wire diameter of 0.020 to 0.035 inch
- (3) Surface temperature of 1400° to 5200° R
- (4) Outlet gas temperature of 600° to 2400° R
- (5) Mass velocity for hydrogen of 0.4 to 3.1 lb/(sec)(sq ft) and for nitrogen of 4.5 to 10.2 lb/(sec)(sq ft)
- (6) Heat flux of 0.5 to 8.3 Btu/(sec)(sq in.)
- (7) Pressure level of 1 atmosphere

The effect of flow bypass, resulting from a mesh heater not filling the flow passage, was investigated on a 0.030-inch-diameter wire mesh for a bypass area of 25 percent.)

INTRODUCTION

The Lewis Research Center is conducting research on a tungsten-water-moderated, hydrogen propelled, nuclear rocket concept. A part of the experimental phase of this program is to evaluate various types of fuel elements and supporting structures at simulated operating conditions

The results of this report were used to design the heating elements of a high-temperature hydrogen preheater for hot flow testing. The prerequisites for these elements were that they must have:

- (1) Capability of being electrically heated to surface temperatures of 5500° R
- (2) Electrical resistance to match an available high-voltage power supply
- (3) Sufficient surface area to transfer the generated heat to the flowing gas
- (4) Sufficient flow area to minimize gas pressure drop

Commercially available tungsten mesh made of interwound helical coils of tungsten wire were considered applicable as the heating elements for this preheater, but their heat-transfer and pressure drop characteristics were not known.

A literature survey revealed that there is a limited amount of experimental heat-transfer and pressure drop data available for forced convective flow through porous wire mesh (referred to by other authors as porous media) and the majority of these data are for constant property conditions. Reference 1, which summarizes the results of the Stanford-Office of Naval Research program on compact heat-transfer surfaces, provides most of the existing data on individual wire mesh elements of different wire diameters and porosities. By using a transient test technique and constant property conditions, this program determined heat-transfer correlations for each mesh. Reference 2 revised these data and obtained a general correlation for all mesh. Similarly the isothermal pressure drop data for each mesh correlated individually with the Fanning type equation, but a general correlation for all meshes was not obtainable. Reference 3 provides the only available variable property heat-transfer and pressure drop data. The data were obtained for steady-state flow of air through an electrically heated tube bank at surface temperatures up to 1100° R.

A considerable amount of pressure drop data are available for fluid flow through packed beds (ref. 4). A comparison between wire mesh and packed beds indicates the pressure drop characteristics of both are dependent on the same basic parameters, that is, mass velocity, fluid properties, and geometrical factors. The correlations reported for packed beds are used as a basis for correlating the pressure drop data of this report.

This report presents experimental variable property pressure drop and heat-transfer correlations for helically coiled wire mesh at average surface temperatures to 5200° R. Six different meshes were tested. The wire diameter varied from 0.020 to 0.035 inch with mesh porosities between 0.640 to 0.722. The mass velocity through these mesh was varied from 0.4 to 3.1 pounds per second per square foot for hydrogen and from 4.5 to 10.2 pounds per second per square foot for nitrogen. The heat flux ranged from 0.5 to 8.3 Btu per second per square inch.

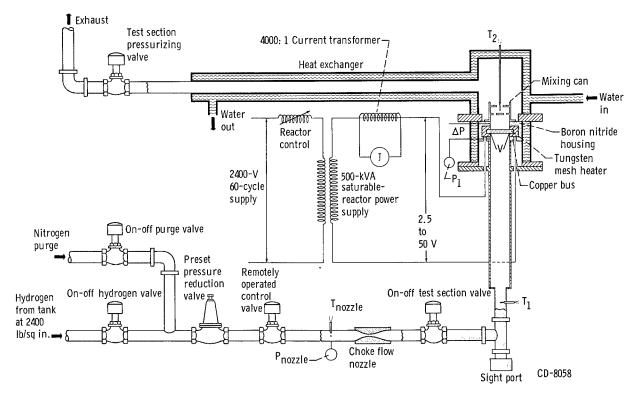


Figure 1. - Schematic diagram of test section apparatus and location of instrumentation.

APPARATUS AND PROCEDURE

A schematic diagram of the flow system, test section, power supply, instrumentation, and corresponding components associated with each, as used in this investigation, is shown in figure 1.

Flow System

As may be seen in figure 1, hydrogen or nitrogen was supplied to the flow system from a tube trailer at a maximum pressure of 2400 pounds per square inch. From the trailer the gas then flowed through a preset pressure reducer valve, a remotely operated control valve, a choked flow nozzle and an on-off valve that supplied gas directly to the test section. The gas flow was metered by means of the choked flow nozzle that assured a constant mass flow through the test section. From the test section the heated gas flowed through a two-baffle molybdenum mixing can and into a gas to water concentric tube heat exchanger where it was cooled below 1000° R before being exhausted into the atmosphere.

For safety purposes, the entire system was purged with nitrogen before hydrogen entered the system, and the controls were set for fail safe operation so if a predetermined safety permissive stops the hydrogen flow, nitrogen would automatically purge the system. In such a case, the electrical test power would also be automatically shut down.

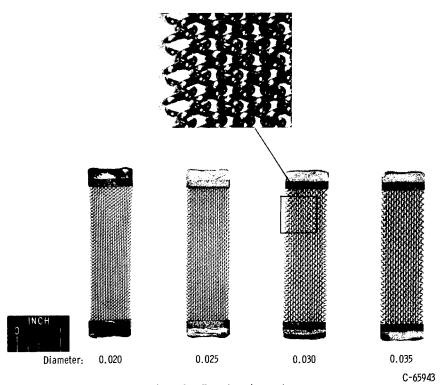


Figure 2. - Tungsten wire mesh.

TABLE I. - MESH GEOMETRIC PARAMETERS

Mesh number	1	2	3	4	5	6
Wire diameter, d, in. Mandrel diameter, D, in. Equivalent diameter, D _e , ft Mesh size (length x width), in. x in. Number of parallel coils, N Coil pitch, p, in./turn Porosity, €	3 × 1	0.060 0.00372 3 × 1 23 0.0814	0.080 0.00635 3 × 1 17 0.111	0.080 0.00642 3 × 1 16 0.125	0.060 0.00425 3 × 3 69 0.0666	0.060 0.00404 3 × 3 69 0.077

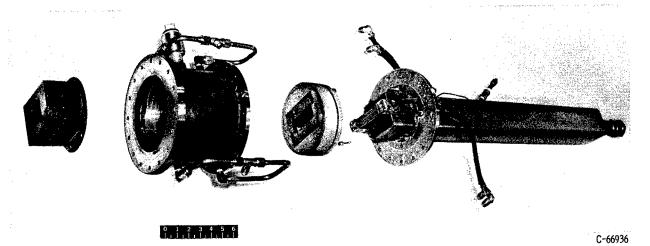


Figure 3. - Exploded view of test section assembly.

Test Section

Experiments were performed on a test section consisting of mesh formed by interwound helical coils of tungsten wire as shown in figure 2. Each end of the coils is sandwiched between two tungsten plates, approximately 0.060 inch thick, and the coils are heliarc welded at the ends of the plates to provide positive mechanical and electrical connections.

Four different 3- by 1-inch meshes were tested, each having a different wire diameter and porosity. Also tested were two 3- by 3-inch meshes, one of which has the same parameters as one of the 3- by 1-inch meshes. Table I lists the geometrical parameters associated with each mesh. The smaller 3- by 1-inch meshes were used for most of the data because they permitted investigation of higher ranges of mass velocities and heat fluxes and approximated the geometry of the final heater design.

Figure 3 shows an exploded view of the test section assembly, which consists of a 3-foot entrance transition section to straighten the gas flow prior to entry into the test section, a boron nitride housing designed to hold and electrically insulate the mesh bus connections and to minimize bypass of the gas around the mesh, a water-jacketed stainless-steel outer housing, and a molybdenum can to mix the gas prior to measuring its temperature. A rubber 0-ring near the cold end of the boron nitride housing prevented leakage of the gas between the boron nitride and the stainless-steel outer support housing. No provision was made for expansion of the mesh. During initial heating, bowing occurred in the flow direction, and the mesh retained a permanent set after cooling. This set could not be changed even by reversing the mesh and heating to 5000° R at high flow rates.

Power Supply

A single phase 60-cycle 500-kilovolt-ampere saturable-reactor controlled

power supply was used to electrically heat the tungsten mesh. Output voltage was varied from 4.7 to 50 volts with a maximum current rating of 10 000 amperes. With bus losses, however, the maximum power to the test element was limited to 225 kilowatts.

Instrumentation

The location of the instrumentation is shown in figure 1. across and the current through the test section were measured. section voltage was taken directly across the mesh to eliminate any error caused by a voltage drop between the power supply and the test section. A true root-mean-square voltmeter was used to measure the test voltage because of the wave form produced by the saturable-reactor controlled power supply. Current was read on a precision ammeter through a 4000:1 step down current transformer. Inlet pressure to the test section was measured with a calibrated 0- to 100pound-per-square-inch Bourdon tube gage. The pressure drop across the mesh was continuously recorded with a ±1-pound-per-square-inch temperaturecompensated strain-gage bridge differential pressure transducer. Inlet temperature was measured with a type K thermocouple (designation ref. 5), and the exit temperature was measured with a platinum/platinum-13-percent-rhodium thermocouple. The exit thermocouple was placed in a baffled molybdenum mixing can to give a true mixed bulk gas temperature. Pressure and temperature measurements at the inlet to the choked flow nozzle were made. The mass flow rate was set by adjusting the nozzle inlet pressure.

METHOD OF CALCULATION

Geometrical Factors

The mesh heating elements were made of interwound helical tungsten coils. These mesh can be completely specified by five parameters: wire diameter d, mandrel diameter D, number of parallel coils N, length of mesh b, and helical coil pitch p. (All symbols are defined in the appendix.)

The geometrical parameters and corresponding equations associated with the calculation of the heat transfer, pressure drop, and mesh surface temperature for the data of this report are as follows:

The length of a single helical coil S is given by the equation

$$S = \frac{b}{p} \sqrt{\pi^2 (D + d)^2 + p^2}$$
 (1)

while the thickness of the mesh in the direction of flow is given by

$$L = D + 2d \tag{2}$$

and the total heat-transfer surface area for N number of coils is

$$A_s = \pi dSN$$

The equivalent diameter for porous media is normally defined as

$$D_{e} = \frac{4(\text{void volume})}{A_{S}} = \frac{4IA_{fl}}{A_{S}}$$
 (4)

where the average flow area is given as

$$A_{fl} = \epsilon A_{ft} \tag{5}$$

The porosity is defined as the average porosity for the entire mesh volume by

$$\frac{\text{Volume of mesh - Volume of tungsten in mesh}}{\text{Volume of mesh}} = \epsilon \tag{6}$$

Average Heat-Transfer Coefficients

The average heat-transfer coefficient was computed from the experimental data by the relation

$$h = \frac{q}{A_{s}(T_{s} - T_{b})} = \frac{Wc_{p,b}(T_{2} - T_{1})}{A_{s}(T_{s} - T_{b})}$$
 (7)

where

$$T_{b} = \frac{T_{1} + T_{2}}{2} \tag{8}$$

The average surface temperature $T_{\rm S}$ of the mesh was determined from the relation between temperature and resistivity of tungsten as given in reference 6. The resistivity was calculated by

$$\zeta = \frac{V}{I} \frac{A_e}{S} \tag{9}$$

where

$$A_{e} = \frac{N\pi d^{2}}{4} \tag{10}$$

Average screen surface temperatures from the resistivity temperature relation calculated by equation (9) were verified by means of an optical pyrometer that was sighted through a port located in the inlet transition section of the test section housing. Optical pyrometer measurements indicated that the entire mesh operated within $\pm 300^{\circ}$ R of the same temperature over its entire frontal area.

Average Friction Pressure Drop

Static pressure taps were located in the boron nitride tunnel close to the mesh to minimize any pressure drop due to friction on the tunnel walls.

The total static pressure drop across the mesh ΔP_{t} is made up of three components, a combined expansion and contraction pressure drop, a momentum pressure drop, and a friction pressure drop.

Neither the expansion nor the contraction losses are experimentally separable from the friction pressure drop as in the case of tube-type flow. They are therefore included as part of the friction pressure drop.

The relation between these components is expressed by the following equation:

$$\Delta P_{t} = \frac{G^{2}}{g} \left(\frac{1}{\rho_{2}} - \frac{1}{\rho_{1}} \right) + \Delta P \tag{11}$$

where $G^2/g\Big[(1/\rho_2)-(1/\rho_1)\Big]$ is the momentum pressure drop and ΔP is the friction pressure drop (including expansion and contraction effects). The mean density for the friction pressure drop calculations as used in equation (11) is evaluated from the static pressures and total temperatures of the gas as follows:

$$\rho_{\rm m} = \frac{1}{R} \frac{P_{\rm l} + P_{\rm 2}}{T_{\rm l} + T_{\rm 2}} \tag{12}$$

The difference between the total and static temperatures of the gas was never more than 1/2 percent. Total gas temperatures were therefore used in these calculations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained from this investigation are presented in table II. Differences between the total electrical heat input and the heat transferred to the gas were due to radiation and conduction losses to the water-cooled buses and jacketed housing.

Heat Transfer

Flow normal to a wire mesh heat-transfer surface is somewhat analogous to flow past a single cylinder in an infinite fluid because the flowing fluid forms a laminar boundary layer on the front portion of the cylinders. Proceeding around a cylinder, the flow accelerates and then decelerates, which causes separation of the boundary layer from the surface producing a turbulent wake behind the cylinder. The heat transferred from the upstream portion of the cylinder where the laminar boundary layer exists can be calculated from the

TABLE II. - TABULATION OF HEATED AND ISOTHERMAL DATA

Run	Mesh number	Voltage, V	Current, I, amp	Average surface temperature, Ts, OR	Gas	Inlet gas temperature, T1, oR	Outlet gas tempera-ture, T2, oR	Gas flow rate, W, lb/sec	Inlet pressure, P ₁ , lb/sq in. gage	Total static pressure drop, ΔP_t , lb/sq in.
					Не	ated				
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1	28.5 39.1 50.1 39.5 29.6 43.5 49.5 29.0	1280 1340 1565 1520 1445 1560 1650 1690 1640 1500	2283 2875 3110 2585 2120 2048 2638 2980 2950 2023	Hydrogen	520	985 1185 1185 1025 885 825 965 1070 1100 845	0.0199 .0199 .0297 .0297 .0297 .0410 .0410 .0410 .0349	2.40 2.60 5.20 5.00 4.70 7.20 7.80 8.10 6.60 5.90	0.159 .219 .395 .325 .265 .194 .454 .504 .435 .305
11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	2	15.0 29.7 22.9 37.7 43.8 48.4 39.3 28.6 19.4 20.7 31.8 41.0 50.9	1805 1960 1880 2080 2100 2160 2360 2280 2155 2080 2220 2360 2470 2560	1618 2680 2225 3152 3500 3800 3450 2980 2400 1780 2435 2900 3345	Hydrogen	520	870 1235 1055 1455 1630 1815 1470 1260 1040 860 810 985 1130	.0297	2.60 3.00 2.90 3.30 3.50 3.60 6.10 5.70 5.20 4.80 7.50 8.20 8.80 9.40	0.259 .409 .339 .489 .539 .589 .835 .715 .555 .445 .634 .804 .964 1.124
25 26 27 28 29 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40	3	21.9 31.0 41.8 41.0 45.8 31.1 19.7 310.0 45.5 17.2 28.5 45.0 20.0 41.2	1800 1900 2000 2165 2205 2140 1920 2205 2300 2360 1960 2110 2220 2280 1780 2000	2460 3153 3870 3570 3850 2950 2120 2790 3330 3610 1865 2695 3395 3700 2300 3820	Hydrogen	520	975 1200 1470 1235 1320 1040 815 925 1060 1150 750 925 1110 1200 925 1455	0.0199 .0297 .0410 .0349 .0199	2.70 2.90 3.10 5.40 5.60 5.10 4.60 7.80 8.20 8.50 5.60 6.20 6.70 7.00 2.60 3.10	0.169 .229 .269 .400 .425 .325 .225 .434 .514 .564 .245 .355 .455 .495 .149 .269
41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 50 51 53 55 57 58	4	23.603.42.1003.25.504.233.3 442.333.003.25.504.233.3 443.449.333.449.333.449.333.3	2170 2420 2520 2680 2570 2390 2550 2720 2860 2470 2640 2780 2860 2000 2520 2880 2890 2890	2900 4020 4338 3963 3585 2638 2490 3345 3900 2570 3395 4020 4250 1925 4338 4213 4213	Hydrogen	520	1160 1655 1845 1445 1290 985 885 1110 1280 925 1160 1370 1480 845 1785 1520 1520	0.0199 .0297 .0411 .0349 .0199 .0199 .0349	2.80 3.30 3.50 5.90 5.60 5.00 7.60 8.40 9.00 6.20 7.00 7.50 7.70 2.50 3.50 7.70 7.80	0.239 .369 .409 .575 .515 .375 .494 .654 .764 .435 .585 .685 .735 .159 .409 .715 .705

TABLE II. - Continued. TABULATION OF HEATED AND ISOTHERMAL DATA

Run	Mesh number	Voltage, V	Current, I, amp	Average surface temperature, Ts, OR	Gas	Inlet gas tempera- ture, T1, oR	Outlet gas tempera- ture, T ₂ , o _R	Gas flow rate, W, lb/sec	Inlet pressure, P ₁ , lb/sq in. gage	Total static pressure drop, ΔP_t , lb/sq in.
59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71	4	22.4 14.8 19.6 16.6 16.5 24.0 26.9 22.8 16.8 30.0 32.0	1280 1094 1160 1010 1082 1121 1320 1396 1320 1280 1185 1420 1460	4325 3500 4200 3475 3885 2365 4485 4700 4285 3280 2710 5065 5213	Nitrogen	515	1270 1070 1255 1125 1255 785 1200 1215 1115 945 820 1280 1335	0.170 .0866 .0866 .0665 .0665 .1270 .1270		
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 81 82 83 84 85 86 88 89	3	16.32 12.60 18.10 18.09 17.5 114.09 14.12 24.16 163.6 29.6	1000 1080 1180 960 1000 1044 1100 920 960 1040 880 920 1000 840 840 940 1000	3203 2975 4725 2625 3420 4075 4588 2400 3515 4270 2545 3140 4485 2900 3700 4430 5173	Nitrogen	515	865 1005 1195 810 945 1085 1185 790 990 1180 860 955 1135 1290 975 1130 1365 1630	0.1460 .127 .1070 .0866		
90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103	5	41.0 46.5 49.0 42.0 46.0 8.2 47.5 47.6 16.5 47.6 16.5 31.8 21.5	3380 3480 3548 3140 3240 3340 2760 3140 3320 3780 3780 3040 3240 3380 2760 2960	3420 3700 3835 3395 3650 3820 1085 1765 2400 3488 1780 2456 2777 1630 2225	Hydrogen	510	1880 2090 2223 2100 2257 2400 685 885 1130 1660 915 1200 1325 865 1095	0.0223		
105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115	6	4.5 7.8 11.1 13.7 28.2 7.3 11.2 19.2 25.9 5.7 11.8	3260 4040 4440 4560 5060 4160 4520 4800 5080 3780 4320	920 1219 1522 1780 3005 1130 1510 2265 2790 992 1645	Hydrogen	540	645 750 865 955 1480 740 865 1130 1405 695 920	.0391		

TABLE II. - Concluded. TABULATION OF HEATED AND ISOTHERMAL DATA

Run	Mesh number	Voltage, V	Current, I, amp	Average surface temperature, T _S ,	Gas	Inlet gas tempera-ture, T1, OR	Outlet gas temperature, T2, OR	Gas flow rate, W, lb/sec	Inlet pressure, Pl, lb/sq in. gage	Total static pressure drop, ΔP_t , lb/sq in.	
	Isothermal										
116 117 118 119 120 121	1				Hydrogen	520	520 	0.0124 .0178 .0232 .0285 .0338 .0391	1.30 2.00 2.70 3.60 4.60 5.60	0.0210 .0415 .0550 .0770 .0875 .1070	
122 123 124 125 126	2				Hydrogen	520	520 V	0.0178 .0232 .0285 .0338 .0391	2.00 2.70 3.70 4.80 6.00	0.0915 .1450 .1970 .2570 .3170	
127 128 129 130 131	3				Hydrogen	520	520 V	0.0178 .0232 .0285 .0338 .0391	2.00 2.70 3.50 4.60 5.80	0.0415 .0550 .0770 .0975 .1170	
132 133 134 135 136	4				Hydrogen	520	520	0.0178 .0232 .0285 .0338 .0391	2.00 2.70 3.60 4.80 5.90	0.0515 .0850 .1170 .1470 .1870	
137 138 139 140 141 142 143					Nitrogen	520	520	0.0261 .0465 .0666 .0866 .1070 .1270 .1460	0.70 1.10 1.90 2.50 3.50 4.50 5.60	0.0080 .0170 .0310 .0500 .0670 .0870 .1040	
144 145 146 147 148 149	2				Nitrogen	520	520 V	0.0465 .0666 .0866 .1070 .1270	1.20 1.90 2.70 3.60 4.65 5.90	0.0460 .0850 .1350 .1870 .2470 .3070	
150 151 152 153 154					Nitrogen	520 V	520	0.0465 .0866 .1070 .1270 .1460	1.20 2.60 3.50 4.50 5.60	0.0210 .0550 .0770 .0925 .1170	
155 156 157 158 159 160 161					Ni trogen	520 	520 	0.0261 .0465 .0666 .0866 .1070 .1270 .1460	0.70 1.20 1.90 2.60 3.50 4.60 5.70	0.0090 .0230 .0410 .0700 .0990 .1280 .1620	

analytical relation that Nusselt number is proportional to the square root of the Reynolds number (Nu $\propto \sqrt{\text{Re}}$ (ref. 7)). However, the downstream portion of the cylinder where the flow separates defies analysis, and therefore experimental data must be used to empirically predict the total heat transfer from such a surface. The presence of adjacent cylinders affects the boundary layer thickness, velocity distribution, and also the nature of the turbulent wake. If the cylinders are interwoven into a mesh, the effective heat-transfer area is less than the total mesh surface area due to wire overlap. The absence of a general correlation for flow through porous media indicates the difficulty in defining the geometrical factors that influence both the heat-transfer and pressure drop characteristics of the system.

The usual dimensionless groups were used to correlate the heat-transfer data by the relation

$$Nu = F[(Re)(Pr)]$$
 (13)

Variable fluid properties and mesh geometry significantly affected the magnitude of these groups. The fluid properties were evaluated at the average bulk, film, and surface temperatures to determine which reference temperature best represented the variable property effects. The changing geometry that the fluid encountered in passing through the mesh was represented by the porosity factor included in the definitions of equivalent diameter $D_{\rm e}$ and flow area Afl as defined in the section METHOD OF CALCULATION.

Figures 4(a), (b), and (c) show the correlation of the heat-transfer data on a bulk, film, and surface temperature basis, respectively. Evaluation of the equilibrium fluid properties at the surface temperature produced the best correlation. The physical properties for hydrogen were taken from reference 8 and for nitrogen from reference 9. The maximum deviation of the data from the correlating equation was ±14 percent for the surface temperature correlation as compared to ±20 percent and ±29 percent for the film and bulk temperature correlations, respectively.

The equation

$$Nu_s = 0.462 \text{ Re}_s^{0.53} Pr_s^{0.40}$$
 (14)

represents the heat-transfer correlation of six helically coiled wire meshes for the following range of properties and conditions:

- (1) Porosity of 64 to 72.2 percent
- (2) Wire diameter of 0.020 to 0.035 inch
- (3) Surface temperature of 1400° to 5200° R
- (4) Outlet gas temperature of 600° to 2400° R
- (5) Mass velocity for hydrogen of 0.4 to 3.1 pounds per second per square foot and for nitrogen of 4.5 to 10.2 pounds per second per square foot

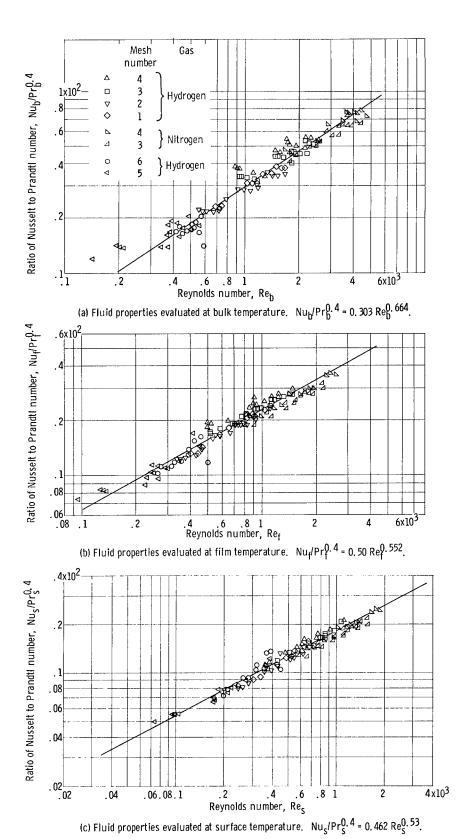


Figure 4. - Correlation of heat-transfer data using equilibrium fluid properties evaluated at bulk, film, and surface temperatures.

- (6) Heat flux of 0.5 to 8.3 Btu per second per square inch
- (7) Pressure level of 1 atmosphere

Practically all of the heat-transfer data presented in the literature for a mesh-type configuration were obtained at low-temperature constant property conditions. The majority of these data were obtained by the Stanford-ONR program on compact heat-transfer surfaces (ref. 1). These investigators studied several woven wire mesh heat-transfer surfaces of different wire diameters and porosities. They were able to determine the heat-transfer characteristics for each mesh but did not present a general correlation for all of the meshes. These data were obtained by a transient test technique whereby the mesh test element was heated to a uniform temperature either in a furnace or by a stream of hot gas and then immediately subjected to a lower temperature gas stream. The time-temperature history of the gas leaving the test element provides the information necessary to calculate the heat-transfer characteristics of the system.

In reference 2, the Stanford-ONR data were revised by substituting the wire diameter d for the equivalent diameter $D_{\rm e}$ and applying a correction factor for that part of the surface area where the wires overlap and reduce the heat-transfer surface. The revised Stanford-ONR data for six meshes resulted in one general correlation.

Reference 3 studied air flow through electrically heated wire tube banks for variable property conditions. Their heat-transfer results based on the film temperature agreed fairly well with the single wire equation of reference 10.

Figure 5 compares this report's correlation with the correlations of references 2, 3, and 10. The Prandtl number was excluded because it was similar for all investigations. A direct comparison was not possible because of the following differences:

- (1) The fluid velocity for all correlations except reference 10 was based on average flow area throughout the mesh as defined by frontal area times porosity. For the single wire data of reference 10, the frontal velocity was used to characterize the flow.
- (2) References 2, 3, and 10 used wire diameter as the characteristic dimension, whereas the equivalent diameter was used for the data of this investigation.
- (3) The data of other investigators were obtained at low temperatures under relatively constant property conditions as compared to the variable property data of this investigation.
- (4) The total surface area was used to evaluate the heat-transfer coefficient for the data of this investigation because it was not possible to accurately define the amount of wire overlap as in reference 2.

The good agreement of the single-wire correlation of reference 10 and the

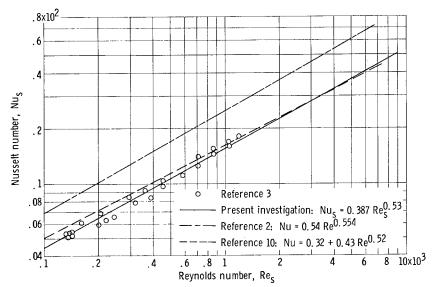


Figure 5. - Comparison of other correlations and data with correlation of this investi-

multiwire tube bank data of reference 3 indicates that the effect of adjacent wires on heat transfer is not significant if the wires do not engage. The differences in the mesh correlations of reference 2 and this report are indicative of the geometry differences between a woven wire mesh and an interwound coil mesh.

The significance of figure 5 lies in the fact that all of the correlations have similar slopes approximating 0.5, which indicates that the forced convective heat transfer for any mesh is primarily a function of the laminar boundary layer conditions on the upstream portion of the mesh surface as defined analytically by Nu \propto C $\sqrt{\text{Re}}$ (ref. 7). Deviations from this square-root function indicate the effect of turbulence created by the different types of mesh geometries. Differences in the coefficient C of the various correlating equations are due to the geometrical factors such as equivalent diameter, flow area, and actual heat-transfer surface area. These factors, which are different for each mesh, preclude a universal heat-transfer correlation for all meshes.

Pressure Drop

The friction pressure drop, as previously mentioned, is made up of two inseparable components (1) a friction component, associated with the surface resistance of the wire mesh and (2) an expansion and contraction component, associated with the area changes the fluid encounters in passing through the mesh. Some investigators (refs. 1, 11, 12, and 13) have used the conventional Fanning equation, which is generally used for fully developed flow through tubes, to correlate pressure drop data for mesh geometries. This has resulted in individual correlations for each mesh. In comparing wire mesh with packed beds it became apparent that pressure drop in both is dependent upon the same parameters, namely, flow rate, viscosity and density of fluid, porosity, packing, size, shape, and surface of the solid. This indicated that a pressure drop correlation similar to that used for packed beds might also be applicable to wire mesh. Following is a more detailed discussion on the methods used for correlating the friction pressure drop data.

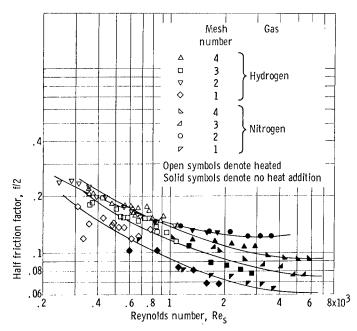


Figure 6. - Correlation of average half friction factor with Reynolds number using conventional Fanning type correlation.

The conventional Fanning equation used to calculate the friction-factor data is expressed by

$$\frac{\mathbf{f}}{2} = \frac{\Delta P g \rho_{\rm m} D_{\rm e}}{41G^2} \tag{15}$$

This equation was used by investigators in references 1, 11, 12, and 13. With the exception of the data of reference 3, pressure drop data of the other investigations has been isothermal. Since this report includes pressure drop data with and without heat addition for hydrogen and without heat addition for nitrogen, a variable property correlation was used. Figure 6 shows f/2 plotted against Reynolds number for the heated and isothermal data for each of the

four 3- by 1-inch meshes tested. The mean fluid density was evaluated on a bulk temperature basis (eq. (12)) and the viscosity on a surface temperature basis. Other combinations of evaluating fluid density and viscosity for the heated data on bulk, film, and surface temperatures were attempted but resulted in more scatter. A comparison of the variable property plots of figure 6 with similar isothermal plots of references 12 and 13 indicates the following similarities exist for meshes of different geometries but within approximately the same porosity range:

- (1) The friction factors are of the same order of magnitude
- (2) The slopes of the curves are similar for the same Reynolds number
- (3) A gradual change of slopes occurs between different flow regimes with changing Reynolds number
- (4) The curves of the same type mesh sometimes cross

The conventional Fanning type equation although providing a means of evaluating friction factors of individual mesh is limited in use to mesh for which pressure drop data has already been experimentally determined. This equation provides the only means of comparing the data contained herein with that of other investigators. The complexity of the flow through the mesh precludes the fact that a general correlation could be obtained by use of the conventional Fanning equation. This led to a method of correlation that can be easily converted to a modified Fanning type equation, discussed later, and which has been successfully used by previous investigators for packed bed geometries.

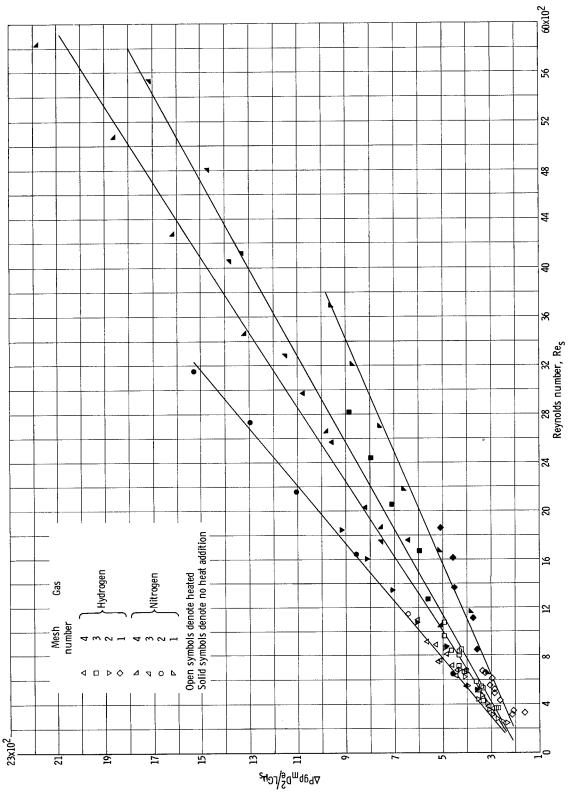


Figure 7. - Pressure drop correlation based on method used in reference 14.

Reference 4 discusses the factors to be considered in correlating parameters that determine energy losses in packed beds. It further gives a good survey of references applicable to packed bed pressure measurements.

Reference 14 represents the pressure gradient by an equation of the form

$$\frac{\Delta P}{\Delta L} = \frac{\mu^2}{g\rho D_e^3} F(Re)$$
 (16)

where, for laminar flow, $\Delta P/\Delta L$ is proportional to the Reynolds number Re and, for turbulent flow, $\Delta P/\Delta L$ is proportional to the square of the Reynolds number Re². In a porous mesh, pressure losses are due to both viscous shear and inertia effects associated with laminar and turbulent flow, respectively. The pressure gradient according to reference 14 can therefore be represented by the sum of the effects of both regimes weighted by the two geometry factors α and β ; that is,

$$\frac{\Delta P}{\Delta L} = \frac{\mu^2}{g \rho_m D_p^3} \left(\alpha \text{ Re} + \beta \text{ Re}^2 \right)$$
 (17)

Dividing both sides of equation (17) by $\text{Re } \mu^2/\text{gp}_\text{m}D_\text{e}^3$ yields

$$\frac{\Delta Pg\rho_{\rm m} D_{\rm e}^2}{\Delta LGu} = \alpha + \beta Re \tag{18}$$

Since α and β are constants dependent upon screen geometry, equation (18) is in the form of a straight line (y = mx + b'). The advantage of this form of friction factor $\left(f = \Delta P g \rho_m D_e^2 / \Delta L G \mu\right)$ is that it is a linear function of the Reynolds number and therefore plots as a straight line on an arithmetic scale. A plot of the isothermal and heated data as shown in figure 7 indicates a straight line can be drawn through the data of each of the four meshes as predicted by equation (18). Since the mesh data plot in the order of porosity, the addition of a porosity factor to the left side of equation (18) was attempted. This should provide a means of plotting the data of all the meshes on a single curve. The best factor was found to be a porosity cube term (ϵ^3) . This was determined to be the optimum value, since larger powers of porosity although bringing the isothermal data closer, caused the heated data to respread so it was no longer in the order of porosity. Hence,

$$\frac{\Delta Pg\rho_{m} D_{e}^{2} \epsilon^{3}}{\Delta LG\mu_{s}} = \alpha + \beta Re_{s}$$
 (19)

where α and β are 48 and 0.1095, respectively, for the data of this investigation.

Figure 8 shows a plot of $\Delta Pg\rho_m D_e^2 \varepsilon^3/\Delta LG\mu_s$ as a function of Reynolds number ranging from 200 to 6000. This provides a straight line correlation for

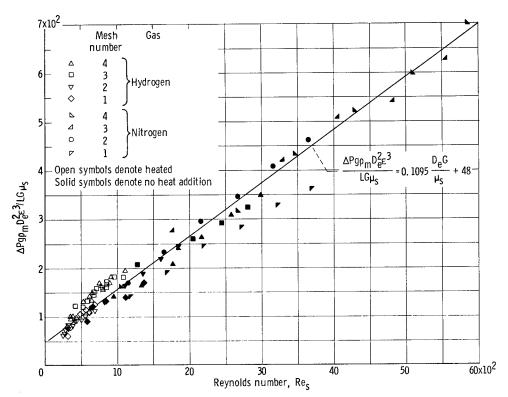


Figure 8. - Pressure drop correlation obtained by modifying method used in reference 14 by porosity cube term.

the data of all the meshes for both heated and isothermal data that has a spread of ±25 percent. It should be noted that the viscosity of the fluid is evaluated at the mesh surface temperature and the density as defined by equation (12) is evaluated at the bulk temperature. Here again, as with the conventional Fanning type correlation, the heated data was in best agreement with the isothermal data when the fluid properties were evaluated at these temperatures.

It should be noted that division of both sides of equation (19) by Reynolds number transforms this equation into a modified Fanning equation

$$\frac{\Delta Pg\rho D_e \epsilon^3}{\Delta LG^2} = \frac{\alpha}{Re} + \beta = f'$$
 (20)

where α/Re is the dominating term in the laminar flow regime and β is the dominating term in the turbulent flow regime and indicates the friction factor approaches a constant for turbulent flow. This is clearly shown in figure 6 where in the turbulent region the friction factors for each mesh approach a constant value.

An equation of the form of equation (20) could have initially been used to obtain a correlation; however, a plot of $\Delta Pg\rho_m D_e/\Delta LG^2$ against Re for each mesh does not plot as a straight line and therefore increases the diffi-

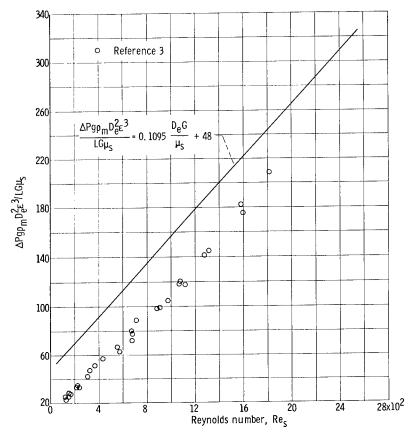


Figure 9. - Comparison of present correlating line with data of reference 3.

culty in obtaining a correlation. Therefore, the approach previously discussed was used.

Figure 9 shows the data of reference 3 for flow of air through banks of vertical rods using the correlation of this report (eq. (19)). This indicates that a similar correlation might be obtained for different types of mesh. Due to geometry differences a single correlation for all mesh would not be expected. However, if enough data on different types of mesh were available, geometry correction factors could probably be found that would enable a universal correlation to be obtained.

Effect of Screen Bypass

The correlation of Nusselt number against Reynolds number as discussed in the section Heat Transfer has been obtained with the mesh fitting into the duct cross-sectional area such that a gap of only 1/64 of an inch (about 3 percent bypass) exists along each 3-inch side of the mesh. Experimental data with hydrogen as the coolant were obtained on one mesh heater of 0.030-inch-diameter wire with a bypass area of 25 percent.

By assuming that all the heat generated in the mesh is transferred to the

gas passing through the mesh, a heat balance can be made on a mesh with bypass as follows:

$$q = W_{M} c_{p,b} (T_{2}' - T_{1})$$
 (21)

The amount of heat transferred to the gas can be represented by the heat-transfer equation

$$q = hA_s(T_s - T_b^{\dagger})$$
 (22)

where

$$T_{b}' = \frac{T_{2}' + T_{1}}{2} \tag{23}$$

for h, the heat-transfer coefficient, the mesh correlation can be substituted as

$$h = 0.462 \frac{k_{s}}{D_{e}} \left(\frac{W_{M}D_{e}}{A_{fl}\mu_{s}} \right)^{0.53} \left(\frac{c_{p}\mu}{k} \right)_{s}^{0.40}$$
 (24)

By combining equations (21) to (24), the following equation can be written for q:

$$q = \frac{0.462 \left(\frac{c_{p}^{\mu}}{k}\right)_{s}^{O.4} \frac{k_{s}}{D_{e}} \left(\frac{W_{M}D_{e}}{A_{fl}\mu_{s}}\right)^{O.53} A_{s} (T_{s} - T_{l})}{1 + 0.462 \left(\frac{c_{p}^{\mu}}{k}\right)_{s}^{O.4} \frac{k_{s}}{D_{e}} \left(\frac{W_{M}D_{e}}{A_{fl}\mu_{s}}\right)^{O.53} \frac{A_{s}}{2W_{M}c_{p,b}}}$$
(25)

where $k_{\rm S}$ and $\mu_{\rm S}$ for hydrogen can be represented as approximate functions of $T_{\rm S}$ by the following relations:

$$k_s = 1.8 \times 10^{-7} T_s^{0.8}$$
 for 500° R > $T_s < 3500^{\circ}$ R (26)

$$\mu_{\rm S} = 9.1 \times 10^{-8} \, {\rm T_S^{0.67}} \, {\rm for} \, 500^{\circ} \, {\rm R} > {\rm T_S} < 5000^{\circ} \, {\rm R}$$
 (27)

For an experimental run the following data were taken W, $T_{\rm S}$, q, $T_{\rm l}$, $T_{\rm 2}$, and $\Delta P_{\rm t}$. Hence all the parameters in equation (25) are known except $W_{\rm M}$, which is then solved for. However, as a means of checking the value of $W_{\rm M}$ determined from equation (25), the total static pressure drop for the mesh was calculated with equations (11) and (19), where G is based on the calculated value of $W_{\rm M}$ flowing through the mesh. The value of $\Delta P_{\rm t}$ calculated from equations (11) and (19) is then compared to the experimental $\Delta P_{\rm t}$ across the mesh and the bypass. The two values of $\Delta P_{\rm t}$, measured and calculated, checked within ±25 percent, which was within the range of data scatter. For the range

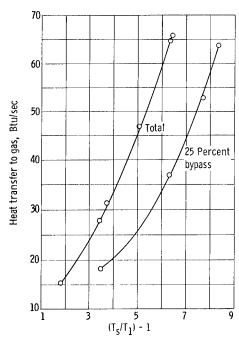


Figure 10. - Comparison of heat transfer to gas with and without bypass from experimental data. Gas flow rate, 0.0199 pound per second; inlet gas temperature, 5200 R; gas, hydrogen.

of conditions run with a 25 percent bypass area, as much as 65 percent of the flow goes through the bypass region.

To illustrate the difficulty encountered with bypass, figure 10 compares a set of experimental curves for a constant mass flow of hydrogen with and without bypass. For greater heat-transfer efficiency, a heating element should be operated near its maximum temperature. From figure 10, it is evident that to transfer a given quantity of heat with bypass a much higher surface temperature is required or for a given surface temperature much less heat is transferred. This could cause heater burnout if a mesh heater were designed without consideration of flow bypass. In order to design a heater where the bypass area is no longer insignificant (≈3 percent or more), experimental bypass flow coefficients are required in addition to the heat-transfer and pressure drop correlations.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Heat transfer and friction pressure drop data at 1 atmosphere were obtained for forced convection of hydrogen and nitrogen through tungsten wire mesh electrically heated to surface temperatures up to 5200° R. Outlet gas temperatures as high as 2400° R and Reynolds numbers from 200 to 6000 with fluid properties evaluated at surface temperatures were obtained. The effect of flow bypass, resulting from a mesh heater not filling a flow passage, was investigated for a bypass area of 25 percent. The following results were obtained for the mesh tested in this investigation:

- l. A variable property heat-transfer correlation for helically coiled wire mesh operating at surface temperatures up to 5200° R has been obtained based on mesh geometry with fluid properties evaluated at the surface temperature.
- 2. A pressure drop correlation for both isothermal and heated data has been obtained based on mesh geometry with fluid properties evaluated at the surface temperature.
- 3. Comparison of experimental data with that of other investigators indicates a universal correlation for all types of wire mesh was not obtained because of the difficulty in evaluating the equivalent diameter, surface area, and flow area that determine the heat-transfer, pressure drop, and fluid flow parameters.

4. Flow bypassing the mesh heater element can cause serious design problems. Experimental data in addition to the heat-transfer and pressure drop correlations are required to design a heater with bypass.

Lewis Research Center,
National Aeronautics and Space Administration,
Cleveland, Ohio, April 15, 1965.

APPENDIX - SYMBOLS

```
current flow cross-sectional area, sq ft
^{\mathrm{A}}\mathrm{_{e}}
       flow area, sq ft
A_{f7}
       frontal area, sq ft
A_{ft}
       surface area, sq ft
A_{S}
       length of mesh, ft (except where otherwise noted)
Ъ
C
       constant
       specific heat of gas at constant pressure, Btu/(lb)(OR)
c_{p}
       mandrel diameter, ft (except where otherwise noted)
D
       equivalent diameter, ft; four times void volume/surface area
D_e
       wire diameter, ft (except where otherwise noted)
d
F
       function
       average conventional friction factor
f
       average modified friction factor
ſ١
       mass velocity through mesh, lb/(sec)(sq ft)
G
       acceleration due to gravity, 32.2 ft/sec2
g
       average heat-transfer coefficient, Btu/(sec)(sq ft)(OR)
h
       current, amps
Ι
       thermal conductivity of gas, Btu/(ft)(sec)(OR)
k
       thickness of mesh in direction of flow (characteristic length), ft
L
       number of parallel coils
N
       Nusselt number, hDe/k
Nu
       pressure, 1b/sq ft
Ρ
       inlet static pressure, lb/sq ft
P_{7}
       outlet static pressure, lb/sq ft
P_2
```

friction pressure drop, lb/sq ft

 ΔP

```
total static pressure drop, lb/sq ft
\Delta P_{t}
        Prandtl number, c_p\mu/k
Pr
        coil pitch, ft/turn
р
        rate of heat transfer to gas, Btu/sec
q
        gas constant, (ft)(lb)/(lb)(OR)
R
        Reynolds number, D_eG/\mu
Re
        total wire length of helical coil, ft
S
        temperature, OR
T
        average bulk temperature, (T_1 + T_2)/2, ^{O}R
\mathtt{T}_{\mathtt{b}}
        average bulk temperature of unmixed gas passing through screen,
T_{\rm b}
          T_1 + T_2/2, OR
        average surface temperature, OR
\mathtt{T}_{\mathtt{S}}
        inlet gas temperature, OR
\mathbf{T}_{\mathsf{l}}
        outlet gas temperature, OR
T_2
T2
        outlet temperature of unmixed gas passing through screen, OR
V
        voltage
        gas flow rate, lb/sec
W
        gas flow rate through mesh, lb/sec
W_{\mathbf{M}}
        experimental screen geometry factor (viscous flow)
α
        experimental screen geometry factor (turbulent flow)
β
        screen porosity
\epsilon
        resistivity of tungsten, ohm-ft
ζ
        absolute viscosity of gas, lb/(sec)(ft)
μ
        mean gas density, (P_1 + P_2)/R(T_1 + T_2), lb/cu ft
\rho_{m}
        inlet gas density, lb/cu ft
\rho_1
```

outlet gas density, lb/cu ft

 ρ_2

Subscripts:

- b bulk
- f film
- s surface

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